



THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

NEWS

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The Cleveland Museum of Art Presents a Beijing Opera Production for Sold Out Performance on Oct. 22

CLEVELAND (Oct. 13, 2004) — Blending acting, dancing and live music with acrobatics and kung-fu-style stage combat, this **Beijing Opera** production of the “Adventures of the Monkey King” will be its Ohio debut at the Cleveland Museum of Art’s **Gartner Auditorium on Friday, Oct. 22 at 7:30 p.m.** The performance is part of the Museum’s acclaimed **VIVA! Festival of Performing Arts**. The production will be preceded by a free gallery talk at 6:30 p.m. on Chinese figural paintings by Anita Chung, the Museum’s associate curator of Chinese Art.

This performance is sold out.

Adorned in sparkling garments of silk brocade and painted facial masks, the dynamic 17-member troupe of actors and musicians includes students and masters of the National Academy in China and is co-directed by Master Zhang Shao Hua and Ghaffar Pourazar. The performance will dramatize the story of the Monkey King, the central figure from the celebrated Chinese fiction, “Adventures of the Monkey King: Journey to the West.” In order to make the performance more accessible to American audiences, selected scenes will be spoken in English.

Beijing Opera is a diverse and unique art form, integrating Chinese traditions and customs dating back to the 12th century. It encapsulates Chinese culture and history, literature, music, dance, acrobatics, stage fighting and acting in addition to the fine arts of face painting and elaborate costumes of the past. Performers generally begin training at age 10 and promptly begin concentrating on one of four principal types of roles: sheng (male roles), tan (female roles), ching (painted-face roles) and chou (clown roles). Each actor or actress specializes in one icon and performs the role throughout the duration of his or her career.

The orchestra is generally a small ensemble of about six or seven members. The head percussionist conducts the accompaniment and coordinates the development of dramatic action, with various gongs signifying specific action as well as the personality of each character. Equally significant are the elaborate costume designs and colors as well as the skillful use of abstract choreography and acrobatics designed to manifest the personality of various characters.

(more)

The next performance in the VIVA! Festival of Performing Arts will feature the sensual dance, Spanish guitar and passionate singing of **Perú Negro on Wednesday, Oct. 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the Museum's Gartner Auditorium.** The 22-member ensemble, founded more than three decades ago, has performed throughout the United States to sold-out houses and rave reviews. The performance marks the group's Ohio debut. Tickets are available for \$31 and \$28; \$28 and \$26 for CMA members by calling (216) 421-7350 or 1-888-CMA-0033 or buying online at www.ClevelandArt.org.

The Museum receives operating support from the Ohio Arts Council and the Institute for Museum and Library Services. Promotional support for VIVA! is provided by Northern Ohio Live and WKSU 89.7 FM.

VIVA! is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.

The Cleveland Museum of Art is one of America's leading comprehensive museums. Its permanent collection is world renowned for its quality and breadth, spanning 6,000 years. The museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and art acquisitions. For more information on the museum, its holdings, programs, services and events, call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.

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